

Somaliland Update – Fall 2022

Dear friends,

Since President H.E. Muse Bihi Abdi's historic visit to Washington, DC in March of this year, Somaliland has made notable progress in our pursuit of strengthened relations with the U.S. and partners around the world.

This newsletter outlines some of the most significant developments, including Congressional recognition of Somaliland's relations with Taiwan, Somaliland's welcoming of senior U.S. diplomatic and defense leaders to Hargeisa, and meaningful engagements with peacebuilding and conservation NGOs.

Please do not hesitate to reach out should you have questions about any of these items or Somaliland more generally.

Warm regards,

Bashir Goth, Somaliland Representative to the United States

Somaliland on the International Stage





Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member ✓
@SenateForeign

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The U.S. is grateful to have friends in Africa like [#Somaliland](#) who support [#Taiwan](#). Recognition of Taiwanese partnership from the international community will only continue to grow in the face of a dangerous and malign [#China](#).



VP Abdirahman Saylici ✓ @VPsomaliland · Oct 9

On behalf of Somaliland, I congratulate the people of Taiwan on the occasion of your national day. We have achieved so much together to advance our shared priorities, based on common values and rooted in democracy.

We look forward to continued cooperation & friendship
@iingwen



5:27 PM · Oct 27, 2022 · Twitter Web App

Somaliland-Taiwan Partnership Applauded by Congressional Leaders

The strength of the partnership between Somaliland and Taiwan, which is rooted in shared democratic values, continues to receive recognition from the international community. In a recent [tweet](#), U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member Jim Risch (R-Idaho) expressed gratitude for “friends in Africa like #Somaliland who support #Taiwan.” Somaliland looks forward to continuing to work with both the U.S. and Taiwan to advance shared democratic objectives. The Taiwan Representative Office in Somaliland also weighed in on Sen. Risch’s tweet. [Read more](#)



AFRICOM'S General Townsend and Ambassador André Visit Somaliland

U.S. Africa Command's General Stephen Townsend and Ambassador Larry André visited Somaliland's capital, Hargeisa, and the Port of Berbera in May. The U.S. military and government officials toured the port and engaged in consultations with President Bihi and other senior members of government about specific areas of collaboration to jointly promote peace and security in the Horn of Africa and the maritime region that borders Somaliland, including the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

As noted in POLITICO's coverage of the visit, the trip indicated that the Biden Administration "takes seriously Somaliland's openness to host a U.S. military foothold in the strategic Horn of Africa to counter China's growing strategic footprint in the region. And that a pair of visits to Washington, D.C., over the past six months by senior Somaliland officials are paying off in terms of U.S. government interest in the territory." [Read more](#)

This visit was supplemented by a U.S. Navy survey visit to the Port of Berbera in August, acknowledging the port's strategic access along major shipping routes and as an entryway into the Horn of Africa.



Delegation Visits Namibia with Cheetah Conservation Fund

In July, a delegation led by Minister of Environment and Climate Change H.E. Shukri H. Ismail Mahmoud traveled to Namibia to explore how Somaliland and Namibia can align on shared priorities and advance collaboration on topics including rural development, tourism, and conservation. The delegation was hosted by the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) and led by the Namibian Association of Community Based Natural Resource Management Support Organizations (NACSO).

In remarks to the delegation, Minister Shukri spoke about Somaliland's "undeterred" efforts in the fight against climate change, "despite facing several challenges, including limited government resources, lack of direct foreign aid, decentralization of environmental governance, and donor funds allocated mainly to social programs." She noted the country's many accomplishments in accordance with its five-year strategic plan, which is aligned with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals.

According to the CCF, NASCO shared its “institutional knowledge and experience about Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM), eco-tourism, and the development of concessions around protected areas. The knowledge transfer between Namibia and Somaliland will assist the Somaliland government in developing their own model to meet the needs of nomadic pastoral communities while mitigating threats to wild species at their new CCF facility.” [Read more](#)



BOBI WINE ✓
@HEBobiwine

...

Today, we came to the close of the two-day conference on Peace and Security in Africa, held in Hargeisa, the capital of the Republic of Somaliland. Great pleasure to meet and learn from His Excellency [@musebihi](#) regarding his country's journey to statehood and nation building.



10:08 AM · Jun 5, 2022 · Twitter for Android

Somaliland Hosts Two-Day Conference “The Inside-Out or Outside-In? Building Peace and States in the Horn of Africa”

A two-day dialogue hosted by the Brenthurst Foundation in Hargeisa in June brought together leaders from throughout the Horn of Africa to discuss means of improving coordination to ensure peace and security within the region. [See more](#)

Uganda's Bobi Wine attended the conference, [tweeting](#) after that it was a “great pleasure to meet and learn from His Excellency [President Bihi] regarding his country's journey to statehood and nation building.”

In his keynote address, President Bihi noted, “Somaliland's journey to statehood was an arduous process. However, the determination of our people to establish their own state was so overpowering and transcended all obstacles.” [Read his full remarks](#)



Foreign Minister Kayd Travels to the Kingdom of Eswatini

In September, Somaliland's Foreign Minister Essa Kayd traveled to the Kingdom of Eswatini for meetings with senior government officials and to join the country's Umhlanga events, a reed dance ceremony celebrated throughout the country. During his visit, Foreign Minister Kayd met with Eswatini's Foreign Minister Thulisile Dladla to discuss opportunities to improve relations between Somaliland and Eswatini. He also [met with](#) Eswatini's Deputy Prime Minister Themba Masuku, U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Caitlin Piper, and Taiwanese Ambassador Jeremy H. S. Liang. Regarding the meeting, Foreign Minister Kayd noted, "It was a great pleasure to meet with H.E Thulisile Dladla and discuss our mutual values and to strengthen our relations." [Read more](#)

Inside Somaliland

MM Somali TV
@MMSomalitv

The President of the Republic of [#Somaliland](#), [@musebihi](#), has today held a video conference meeting with ambassadors & deputies along with the diplomats such as [#EU](#) Ambassador [@TiinalIntelmann](#). This meeting was discussed the activities of humanitarian aid & election issues.



8:15 AM · Nov 8, 2022 · Twitter for Android

NEC Announces Timeline for Presidential Election

Somaliland's National Election Commission (NEC) recently [announced](#) a new timeline for preparations that will lead to the next presidential election in July 2023. In announcing this decision, the NEC cited financial constraints and delays in both voter registration and license renewals for Somaliland's political parties. In order to ensure the continuity of Somaliland's government in the interim, the upper house of Parliament acted in accordance with Somaliland's Constitution to extend President Muse Bihi Abdi's term through this period. The upper house of Parliament has previously taken similar action when delays of this kind have occurred in the past.

President Bihi's administration subsequently [affirmed its commitment](#) to expedite elections within the timeline set forth by the NEC, noting in a statement:

"My administration will work with Somaliland's democratic institutions to ensure that the upcoming presidential election is held as expeditiously as possible, with guidelines established by the NEC. We further commit to continue dialogue with all political stakeholders in the hope that we will come together as fellow citizens to advance our democratic processes and dispense with provocative rhetoric and actions that are meant to sow division."

Over the past month, the National Political Parties Registration Committee has worked to obtain the requisite signatures from registered voters to confirm the eligible political parties across Somaliland. That process, which included [observation by civil society organizations](#), has been completed. The NEC will now turn to facilitating the election of political parties, which will determine the final pool of candidates for the presidential election in July 2023.

Following the Cabinet's recent budget approval, the Office of the President [tweeted](#) "With the approval of Somaliland's 2023 budget, the National Election Commission (@SLNECHQ) has the resources necessary to begin the voter registration process, enabling us to hold elections as soon as possible in 2023, directed by the NEC's timeline."

Most recently, Somaliland's Committee for Registration of Political Associations and Approval of National Parties (CRPAANP) [approved](#) nine political associations to be included in the final round of direct elections. For the first time in Somaliland's

history, eligible associations include one led by a woman and groups from Somaliland's Sool, Buuhoode, and Awdal regions.

In a video conference earlier this month, President Bihi briefed ambassadors, diplomats, and other stakeholders about current the humanitarian aid taking place in Somaliland, as well as the status of the upcoming election.



USAID's Power Africa Releases Report on Investing in the Somaliland Power Sector

In a new report, Power Africa's East Africa Energy Program (EAEP), an office of the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID), highlights Somaliland's well-developed power generation sector as an opportunity for foreign investment. The report acknowledges the rapid evolution of Somaliland's power sector over the past 30 years since reclaiming its independence. It also highlights opportunities for investors to get involved in building this emerging power sector.

The report notes that "Somaliland's power sector has evolved and developed rapidly following the cessation of a civil war in 1991. The rebuilding of the power sector has resulted in privately owned electricity service providers (ESPs) building and consolidating distribution power systems for large urban centers. There is no power transmission system in Somaliland, and population centers are serviced by a mix of diesel power generators with some solar and battery energy storage. Somaliland's power sector has reached a major transition point and requires increased capital to further develop. To facilitate this development, more independent power producers (IPPs), investors, and technology providers need to become involved." It acknowledges that "Despite gaps in Somaliland's enabling environment, developers and investors can take pragmatic measures to manage risks through special arrangements and agreements with local partners, the Somaliland administration, and off-takers." [Read more](#)



U.S. Experts Embark on Study Tour of Somaliland

In August, the Government of Somaliland was pleased to host a visit by the former Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region Dr. J. Peter Pham, former Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Tibor Nagy, former Commander of U.S. Africa Command General Kip Ward, and the Heritage Foundation's Joshua Meserve. The delegation met with senior government officials, including President Bihi and Foreign Minister Essa Kayd, non-governmental organizations, and a range of political leaders. They also visited the Port of Berbera, the University of Hargeisa, and cultural landmarks such as the caves at Laas Geel.

In an interview concluding the delegation's visit, General Ward reflected on his time in Somaliland in 1993, during which he saw "the destruction that had occurred" as a result of the civil war. He noted that during this visit, he saw "a totally different

picture. A picture of development, a picture of growth, a picture of vibrancy in the streets, with people moving around, children going to school, working. For me, that was a very distinct and real difference from my last time of being here almost 30 years ago. It's important, from my point of view, that the great progress that the people of Somaliland have been able to have over this timeframe continues to improve and move forward so that what is seen as progress, in fact, is sustained and does not change." [Watch the full interview](#)

Other members of the delegation shared highlights from the visit on their social media accounts:



Dr. J. Peter Pham 
@DrJPPham

...

Awed by the neolithic cave paintings at [#LaasGeel](#) in [#Somaliland](#), including some of the earliest known depictions in [#Africa](#) of domesticated aurochs (ancestors modern cattle). Delighted to share the experience with Amb. [@TiborPNagyJr](#) as well as [@GenKipWard](#) & [@JMesurvey](#).



10:44 AM · Aug 14, 2022 · Twitter for Android



Joshua Meservey
@JMeservey

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It was wonderful to visit the Taiwan mission to Somaliland where we were received with great hospitality. Somaliland and Taiwan have already accomplished great things together, I'm excited to see what they will do next.

Taiwan In Somaliland @Taiwan_SLD · Aug 14

It is delighted to meet with like-minded friends @TiborPNagyJr @DrJPPham , @GenKipWard & @JMeservey from #USA for constructive discussions.



10:43 AM · Aug 14, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone



Tibor Nagy
@TiborPNagyJr

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Pleased for our delegation to meet with leaders of [#Somaliland](#) opposition parties to discuss forward progress of democracy. Nation's sovereignty and international recognition is something all agree on!



3:36 AM · Aug 16, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone



Obama Foundation Recognizes Somaliland's Deqa Aden as 2022-2023 Obama Scholar

In an incredible honor for Somaliland, Deqa Aden was selected as one of this year's Obama Foundation Scholars. Ms. Aden, a graduate of Somaliland's Abaarso School, is currently pursuing a master's degree from the University of Chicago's Harris School of Public Policy. She is an outstanding leader and advocate for Somaliland's women and youth, having most recently served as a Manager at Harhub, a business incubator in Somaliland that creates jobs for vulnerable youth across the country through mentorship and grant investments. Additionally, her advocacy and work to provide medical treatment and legal services to victims of gender-based violence will have a tangible impact of the lives of women throughout the region. [Read more](#)



Representative Goth Addresses Students at University of Chicago

Bashir Goth, the Somaliland Representative to the United States, was invited to speak at an event hosted by the University of Chicago, in partnership with the Pearson Institute for the Study and Resolution of Global Conflicts, about the history of Somaliland. At the event, Representative Goth outlined the history of Somaliland and touched on its present-day situation, noting, "Somaliland is not only striving for peace, stability, and democracy but also innovation." He highlighted that "Somaliland has all the requirements of nationhood including territory, population, democratically elected government with three branches of government such as legislative (a bicameral parliament), judicial, and executive. It has its own currency and passports,

military, other security forces, and universities including an American school and university.” He also compared Somaliland to the Rosetta Stone, noting that “Somaliland is waiting for its ripe moment when its code will be deciphered. And once that happens it will be key to many lessons to be learnt from Somaliland’s homegrown state building trajectory.” [Read more](#)



Somaliland National TV ✓
@SLNTV

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His Excellency @musebiihi, the President of the Republic of Somaliland and the Waheen Market National Relief Committee have officially approved the new design of Hargeisa Waheen Market. As new design was approved the rebuilding of the market will start shortly.

[#RebuildHargeisa](#)



3:51 PM · Jun 21, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

Progress in the Rebuilding of Hargeisa’s Waheen Market

On April 1, an immense fire destroyed Hargeisa’s Waheen Market and downtown business area. The losses, currently estimated at \$2 billion, impacted more than 5,000 small, medium, and large businesses and their employees, representing nearly 60 percent of Somaliland’s GDP.


The Government of Somaliland has committed more than \$1.7 million to secure and clear the destroyed areas, provide basic services to those affected, and support efforts to restart businesses, especially for vulnerable groups.

Construction commenced following approval of the design for the new Waheen Market in June. Somaliland remains grateful for the expressions of support it received from international partners in the wake of this devastating fire. [See photos](#)



Lizzie Walker
@LizzieWFCDO

...

So proud of  role in this project which will expand the network of safe drinking water across Hargeisa - to reach 900,000 more people.

The severe drought and the ongoing effects of climate change, in [#Somaliland](#) and the region, show just how vital infrastructure like this is



Morgan Riley @Morgan_FCDO · Oct 26

Pleased to see the progress of the Hargeisa Urban Water Supply Project #HWA
This will provide safe drinking water  for 900,000 people in #Hargeisa
    are proud of our #SDF \$18 million contribution to the project over the last 10 years #ukaid

4:57 AM · Nov 4, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

UK Foreign Office in Hargeisa Champions Hargeisa Urban Water Supply Project Progress

Representatives from the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in Hargeisa tweeted about the exciting progress being made on the Hargeisa Urban Water Supply project. The project, organized by UN Habitat, aims to upgrade

Hargeisa's water production system to provide safe drinking water for more than 900,000 people. Among the project's updates are the construction of a new 23 km main water pipeline, a new modern water pumping station, and additional developments. [Read more](#)



IFFCO and DP World to Develop Edible Oil Packing Plant in Somaliland

UAE-based food producer IFFCO and DP World signed a 25-year lease with the Berbera Economic Zone (BEZ) in Somaliland to develop a 300,000 square foot packing facility – a move that will create hundreds of local jobs for Somalilanders and attract international investment interest. This agreement is the latest installment in DP World's plans to develop the BEZ following its investment in the Port of Berbera. [Read more](#)

Closing Viewpoints



LUBBOCK AVALANCHE-JOURNAL

Lubbock Avalanche-Journal: Nagy: The best little country you've never heard of

Ambassador Tibor Nagy reflects on his August visit to Somaliland and likens the country to his home state of Texas, noting, "Americans like underdogs, especially when they are feisty, self-reliant, and stand up to bullies. ... Somaliland's self-declared independence is also very Texas-like ... they have done it on their own, without receiving any of the billions of dollars in foreign aid which has been showered on the rest of Africa." [Read more](#)

DAILY MAVERICK

The Daily Maverick: Somaliland is an unrecognised African success in a notoriously troubled region

The Brenthurst Foundation's Dr. Greg Mills asserts that international recognition of Somaliland's statehood "would be an investment in African stability," noting, "Somaliland shows that peace cannot be built by outsiders, no matter their good intentions. It is instead to be founded on internal compromise, avoiding in the process all the pitfalls of external engagement. Good outcomes do not always lie in the bias to action." [Read more](#)



Just Security: The Failing Response to Violent Extremism in Africa – and the Need to Reform the International Approach

In his analysis of responses to violent extremism in Africa, Marc Sommers, former Senior Conflict Advisor for the United States State Department, touts Somaliland's approach as an excellent and successful example: "The key to Somaliland's remarkable success in staving off advances by al-Shabaab is reputable, credible, legitimate governance. 'The Somaliland government's fostering of a virtuous circle' is the key to their success. The circle features 'effective, locally derived governance that supports broad community buy-in,' which then 'allows the government to combat militancy.'" [Read more](#)



Office of the Somaliland Representative in the United States

This material is distributed by FGS Global on behalf of the Republic of Somaliland. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Somaliland Mission USA
6019 Tower Court
Alexandria, VA 22304

Office: 703-370-1423

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